

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Consent Item:

Non-Public Preschool and Kindergarten Voluntary Recognition Process

Applicable Statute(s) or Regulation(s):

KRS 156.160 (3)
704 KAR 3:410 (4) (7)
16 KAR 2:040
16 KAR 2:140

Action Question:

Should the Kentucky Board of Education approve the proposed changes to the voluntary process for recognizing non-public preschool and kindergarten programs?

History/Background:

Existing Policy

According to KRS 156.160(3), any private, parochial or church school may voluntarily comply with curriculum, certification, and textbook standards established by the Kentucky Board of Education and be recognized for this voluntary compliance. The Kentucky Board of Education approved the Voluntary Recognition Process for Non-Public Preschools and Kindergartens in 1995. This process is separate from the recognition process for a regular program of a school serving the full grade range (e.g., K-12, K-8, K-6) administered by the Kentucky Non-Public School Commission (NPSC).

Non-public preschool and kindergarten programs are educational programs that are not associated with a school serving upper levels of elementary school. Teachers in these non-public preschool and kindergarten programs do not have the opportunity for professional benefits associated with teaching in recognized public and non-public schools. These benefits include recognition of years of teaching experience for salary and retirement purposes, college loan exemptions for teachers, as well as the possibility of completing a teacher internship in these sites.

The attached voluntary certification process approved by the Kentucky Board of Education provides the opportunity to voluntarily be recognized for compliance with curriculum, certification, and textbook standards required in the public schools. This process uses existing regional and national accreditation systems relevant to the education of young children, in conjunction with documentation of teacher credentials meeting Kentucky standards. The process also includes an emergency one-year interim approval while a local

program is completing a self-study process required by the regional or national accrediting body.

Minor amendments are being proposed to the process for clarification. The first clarification adds language to 2.B.2.: For Preschool Teachers: Credentials meeting 704 KAR 3:410 Preschool Education Program for Four-Year-Old Children. Note: Copies of the appropriate teaching certificates, Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) or letter of exemption issued from 1998 through 2002.

The second note of clarification follows 2.B.2. and states: Programs that serve blended age groups within a single setting or classroom, must meet one or both criteria for certification (example: blended three- four- and five-year-old classrooms would require a staff member or members with appropriate certification; in this case this would require appropriate certification for a kindergarten teacher and a preschool teacher).

Staff Recommendation(s) and Rationale(s):

Staff recommends the Board approve the clarifications to the Voluntary Certification Process for Non-Public Preschools and Kindergartens.

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